

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Maria D'Amato, Soprano

Soprano Maria D'Amato's voice was described recently by *Opera News* as "beautifully floated" and "a gem" as Desdemona in *Otello* in this season of Sarasota Opera where she had also performed Mimi in *La bohème* last season after her debut in the role with Dicapo Opera Theatre in New York City. Next season she returns to Sarasota for Gilda in *Rigoletto* and Liu in *Turandot*. Recent roles include Pamina in Sarasota Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte*, Thibault in *Don Carlos* and Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Other roles include Despina in *Così fan tutte*, and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, both performed with the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program; Nannetta in *Falstaff*, and Poppea and Drusilla in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, all with Opera North, New Hampshire. Ms. D'Amato holds a B.M. from Boston University and an M.M. from the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music (CCM), where she sang Despina (for which she won CCM's Sam Adams Award for best operatic performance), Sarah Good in *The Crucible*, and Molly Picon in the world premiere of Joel Hoffman's *Memory Game*. Equally at home on the concert stage, she debuted with the Seattle Symphony under Maestro Gerard Schwarz as the soprano soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*. She was a soloist in Bach's *B-minor Mass* and Mozart's *C-minor Mass* in Cincinnati, and was a soloist in *Carmina Burana* with both the North Arkansas Symphony and the Eugene Ballet. She was the soprano soloist with the Artist Series of Sarasota in their *Golden Age of Operetta* concerts and most recently sang the soprano 1 solos in Mendelssohn's *Lobengang* with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Awards include Licia Albenese-Puccini Foundation grants and appearances in concert at Alice Tully and Rose Halls, Giulio Gari Foundation grants, and the LendonTodd Munday Encouragement Award from the Jensen Foundation.

Jennifer Feinstein, Mezzo-Soprano

In 2011-12 Jennifer Feinstein made her Carnegie Hall debut and Opera Orchestra of New York debut in *Adriana Lecouvreur* as Madame Dangeville. In the 2010-11 season Ms. Feinstein made her Spoleto Festival (USA) debut in *The Medium* as Mrs. Nolan; and her European debuts at the Beethoven Easter Festival as Francisca in Donizetti's *Maria Padilla* in Warsaw (recorded for release on the Naxos label), and with Orchestra Sinfonica di Giuseppe Verdi in Milan as Ruth Sherwood in *Wonderful Town*. In summer of 2011 she sang in Noel Coward's *Bittersweet* at Bard's SummerScape Music Festival. She has performed with Opera Theatre of St. Louis as Second Salvation Army Girl in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*, as well as covering Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and Stephano in *Romeo and Juliet*. She has performed at Indiana University Opera Theater in the title role in *La Cenerentola*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Katisha in *The Mikado*, and Dame Doleful in *Too Many Sopranos*. Jennifer Feinstein placed third in the 2012 Gerda Lissner Competition and was a national semi-finalist in Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions for 2010. She was a finalist in the National Opera Association, Jensen Foundation, Bel Canto Vocal Scholarship, semi-finalist in the Shreveport Opera Singer of the Year competition, and has received Encouragement Awards from the Marilyn Horne Foundation Competition, Opera Index, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Jennifer received both her Master of Music and Bachelor of Music degrees from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music and a Master of Music from the Yale University School of Music.

Megan Hart, Soprano

This season soprano Megan Hart made her Carnegie Hall debut in a recital of Liszt Songs with the Marilyn Horne Legacy at Carnegie Hall, and her Annapolis Opera debut as Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette*. Recently, Ms. Hart sang scenes from *Lucia di Lammermoor* at the Giulio Gari Foundation Gala, performed the role of Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* with the Bronx Opera, and performed a recital as the winner of the Marilyn Horne Song Competition. Last season, she sang Adina in *L'elisir d'Amore* with Tacoma Opera, scenes from *Prima Donna* with Rufus Wainwright and the Oregon Symphony, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the Music Academy of the West conducted by George Manahan, and the title role in *Alcina* with Bourbon Baroque. As a three-year resident of the prestigious Seattle Opera Young Artists Program, she performed the roles of Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, Tyania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Lauretta and Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, the Bergère, Chauve-Souris, Pastourelle, Chiffre, and Chouette in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, the Girl in *Trouble in Tahiti*, and the title role in *Rita*. Other operatic highlights include Almirena in *Rinaldo* and the Spirit of the Boy in *Curlew River* at Central City Opera; Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* with the Crested Butte Music Festival; Sibyl in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with Center City Opera Theater; Venere in *Venere, Amore e Ragione* with Bourbon Baroque; Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Gianetta in *The Gondoliers*, and the Owl, Bat and Shepherdess in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, all with Opera North; Amina in *La sonnambula* with Oberlin in Italy; Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with Oberlin Opera Theater and the Bay Area Summer Opera Theater Institute; a cover of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis; and Elle in *La voix humaine*, Blanche in *Les dialogues des Carmélites*, the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* (conducted by Eve Queler), Venus in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and Lady Billows in *Albert Herring* all with Oberlin Opera Theater.

Steven LaBrie, Baritone

Steven LaBrie, a native of Dallas, Texas, is a graduate of The Academy of Vocal Arts (AVA) in Philadelphia, PA. Last summer, he made his debut with Glimmerglass Opera as Araspe in the United States premier of Handel's *Tolomeo* followed by another United States premier as the Miller in *El gato con botas* with Gotham Chamber Opera at the New Victory Theatre in New York. He made his debut with the Dallas Opera in February as Paris and Mercutio in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. Most recently, Mr. LaBrie sang in an Opera Soiree with the St. Barth's Music Festival under the baton of Maestro Steven Mercurio. Mr. LaBrie has been the recipient of several awards from Opera Index, Inc, The Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions, Palm Beach Opera Competition, and the Dallas Opera Competition.

Samuel Levine, Tenor

American tenor Samuel Levine, acclaimed for his "powerful and fluid" singing, thrilling dramatic presentations, and outstanding musical intelligence, is a member of the Yale Opera Studio in New Haven, CT, where this season he performs in Britten's *The Rape of Lucrecia* and Beethoven's 9th Symphony. Other season highlights include Wagner's *Rienzi* with Opera Orchestra of New York, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with Orpheus New England and the mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, and an appearance in recital at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall under the auspices of the Liederkranz Foundation. Mr. Levine made his international debut with Vexford Festival Opera in 2009 as Léon in John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*, a role he also performed with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis that same year. Additional credits include *The Santa Fe Opera* (*The Last Savage*), Chicago Opera Theater (*Mose in Egitto*), Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi (*Wonderful Town*), Aspen Music Festival (*Don Giovanni*), and concerts at the Tanglewood Music Center. At Yale, he has also performed Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Vanished*, as well as leading roles in *Don Giovanni*, Holby's *The Scarf*, and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. The Boston native spent two seasons as Apprentice Singer at The Santa Fe Opera, an additional two seasons as Geridine Young Artist at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and was a Vocal Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center under the direction of Maestro James Levine. Mr. Levine is the 2012 winner of the St. Bonaventure Performance Prize from the Liederkranz Foundation.

Kevin Ray, Tenor

Kevin Ray, a tenor from Cornwall, N.Y., recently completed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music. He has been honored this season by The Gerda Lissner Foundation, The Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, The Wagner Society of New York, Opera Index, The Liederkranz Foundation, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, where he sang in the Grand Finals Concert. Beginning with the 2012-13 season, he will join the Houston Grand Opera Studio. His current season features Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, a work he last performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2010, as well as concerts for the Peoria Symphony Orchestra and The Gerda Lissner Foundation. At Curtis, Mr. Ray has been seen as Don José in *La Traviata* and as the Schoolmaster in *The Cunning Little Vixen*. Last summer he returned to Santa Fe Opera, where he played A Poet in Menotti's *The Last Savage* and covered the Drum Major in *Wozzeck*. Also in Santa Fe, he created the role of Second Clubman in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *The Letter* under Patrick Summers in 2009. Mr. Ray has also trained at the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera and at Music Academy of the West where he portrayed Jules Goddard in William Bolcom's *A Wedding*. He has received awards from The Gerda Lissner Foundation, The Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, Annapolis Opera and Opera Columbus, and participated in the inaugural Lauritz Melchior International Singing Competition in Aalborg, Denmark. He studied for several years as a baritone, when he sang such roles as Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Don Alvaro in *Il viaggio a Reims*, Golaud in *Impressions of Pelléas*, Robert in *Isolde* and Conte Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Mr. Ray is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he received a bachelor of music degree in voice performance.

Ricardo Rivera, Baritone

In the 2011-2012 season, Ricardo made his Lincoln Center debut in the role of Orsini in Wagner's *Rienzi* with The Opera Orchestra of New York under the baton of Eve Queler in Avery Fisher Hall. He also performed on the Metropolitan Opera Stage in the Semi-Finals of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Most recently he presented the title role in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* with the Mannes Opera and Orchestra, under the baton of Joseph Colaneri. Ricardo has performed at the Castleton Festival, Opera North, Mannes Opera, and Pocket Opera of New York under the batons of Lorin Maazel, Joseph Colaneri, and Louis Burkot in the roles of Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*, Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Morales in Bizet's *Carmen*, Fiorello in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Le chat/L'horloge comtoise in Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, and Roderick in Debussy's *La chute de la maison Usher*. Ricardo was a National Semi-Finalist in the 2012 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (MONC), winning 1st Place in the Eastern Region. He also won 3rd Prize in the 2012 Gerda Lissner Competition, 1st Prize and Audience Prize in the 2011 NY Lyrical Opera Competition, 4th Prize in the 2011 Connecticut Opera Guild Competition, and Encouragement Awards from the 2011 Gerda Lissner, 2011 Licia Albanese-Puccini, 2011 MONC, 2010 Opera Index, and 2010 Career Bridges Competitions. Ricardo holds BM and MM degrees from Mannes College the New School for Music where he was awarded the Shoshana Foundation's Richard F. Gold Career Grant in 2008.

Douglas Martin, Piano

For the last 25 years, Douglas Martin has been a freelance operatic conductor and pianist in New York City. Last fall he assisted James Conlon in preparing the Los Angeles Opera production of Janacek's *Jenufa* with Karita Mattila. Beginning in 2002, he landed what could be considered a dream job, operatic in nature but in commercial theater, serving as Assistant Conductor for Baz Luhrmann's critically acclaimed production of *La bohème*. He conducted the show in San Francisco, in New York City for the Broadway run, followed by a sold-out three-month limited run in Los Angeles in 2004. Working with Luhrmann provided an affirmation of deeply held ideals of operatic performance - that of vigor, the power of the text, and employing "tempos of life." Mr. Martin was Resident Conductor at the Ashland Summer Opera Festival in Charlottesville, Virginia where later, in 2004 and 2005 he served as Music Director. During his tenure there, he conducted over 16 productions including Carlisle Floyd's *Susanna*; Marc Adamo's *Little Women*, *Magic Flute*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Music Man*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *South Pacific*. Mr. Martin has enjoyed working with many great operatic stars through his association with Maestro Eve Queler and The Opera Orchestra of New York, commencing with their production of *Tristan und Isolde* in 1997. He has also conducted and coached many world class singers in Mexico City in the Germanic repertoire for the Opera de Bellas Artes; at the Wexford Festival in Ireland; at the Stadttheater Pforzheim in Germany; as well as the American Opera Center at the Juilliard School. In 1982, Mr. Martin joined the staff of the Santa Fe Opera where he returned for the 1983, 1988, 1989, and 1990 summer seasons. He received a Performer's Certificate from SUNY Fredonia in 1979 and a Master of Music Degree in Piano from Indiana University in Bloomington in 1987. Since January 1993, New York City has been Mr. Martin's home where he resides with partner Bill Clarke, an established set and costume designer.

Eve Queler, Founder & Conductor Laureate

Eve Queler is internationally recognized for her ground-breaking work with the Opera Orchestra and as a guest conductor of symphonic and opera repertoire at venues that span the international musical world. She has conducted more than 100 operas in concert at Carnegie Hall, many of which are rarely performed, bringing them to the attention of the American public and introducing them to the standard repertoire. Ms. Queler has conducted at opera companies worldwide, including Oper Frankfurt, Oper Bonn, Kirov Opera, Hamburg Oper, Rome Opera, and the Australian Opera; and has led the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Montreal Symphony, and the Orchestra Sinfonia Siciliana in Palermo, Italy. Ms. Queler championed many Russian and Czech operas unknown in the U.S. and was the first conductor in America to perform Mussorgsky's unfinished *Khovanshchina* with orchestration by Shostakovich, as well as the first Czech-language performance of Janacek's *Katya Kabanova* in 1979, *Jenufa* in 1988 and Dvorak's *Rusalka* in 1987. Ms. Queler's recently made her debut at the Puccini Festival, Torre del Lago conducting Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Ms. Queler has been named a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, one of the highest awards presented by the French government, for her commitment to French opera. In October 2010, she was named a National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honoree for her focus on rarely performed operas and for her dedication to emerging singers, which she has brought to her work as music director of the Opera Orchestra of New York. This award for Lifetime Achievement in Opera is considered the nation's highest honor in opera and salutes our nation's cultural treasures. Most recently, Maestro Queler was honored by Opera Index for her outstanding dedication and work with young artists.

The Opera Orchestra of New York

The mission of The Opera Orchestra of New York is to present high-quality performances of seldom-heard operatic masterpieces in a concert setting featuring internationally acclaimed stars and exceptional young singers; to offer a professional training program to talented emerging artists; and to develop an appreciation of opera among diverse audiences, while cultivating a new generation of supporters.